

To: Members of the Command Staff, Newark Police Department

From: Dr. Dorothy Guyot, Northwestern University Project on
Governmental Responses to Crime

I welcome this opportunity to sit down with you to learn about the history of your department. As the attached page of description indicates the project covers the years 1948 to 1978. I would like to discuss with you the late 1940s, the '50s and the 60s.

My most general question is: in each of these decades what have been the major policy changes and new programs of the department? The reason for the question is to get an understanding of how the department evolved in protecting and serving the city.

I also have some specific questions about specific units of the department where you may remember how developments took place or you may know of records or individuals which would trace the developments. Attached are sheets on record-keeping, proactive specialized units, and external relations. These questions also cover the 1970s.

To my thinking, the most important question for discussion is the general one. If we do not have time to discuss the specifics of records, etc. that is no problem. By the general question I mean any major change in what the department has done, because there is a new or changed problem to meet. For instance, the creation of a narcotics unit, the creation of the youth aid bureau are ways of meeting a changing problem. I also mean improved ways of doing the regular job, such as the introduction of two-way radio contact with patrol cars. In particular I am looking for policies where the department has to get approval from the City because these were major changes. For instance, over the years there have been efforts to get a new central headquarters and to close down precinct stations. If this effort at centralization had been successful it would have been a major change.

I look forward to meeting with you.

We will meet in Chief Martin's Office at 1:00 P.M., Monday, July 16th, 1979.

To: Deputy Chief Arnold Evans - Det. Div. ✓
Inspector M. B. ... - Staff Services Div.
Deputy Chief George Hemmer - Comm. & Youth Serv. Div.
Deputy Chief Thomas W. Martin - Records & Comm. Div.
Deputy Chief Kenneth Melchior - Patrol Division
Inspector Thomas O'Reilly - Detective Division
Mr. Joseph B. Nellegar - Record Bureau

Group Discussion with Members of the Newark
Police Department

Foot Patrol -- In 1948 the status of officers who walked on foot patrol was very low. They were considered unimportant by all the rest of the department. It was considered a promotion to get to fill a radio car. An example of how little the rest of the department thought of a foot officer is that when a foot officer called for an ambulance or a paddy wagon, first a radio car would come by to check whether an ambulance was necessary. Of course, if officers in a car called for an ambulance, it came right away. This would be particularly annoying to police officers who would have a walking post as their regular post but then if someone was sick would have the radio car. They would be working a car that night and when they called for a special vehicle it would come right away. And they were angry at what made them wiser and listened to when they are in a car as compared to when they are on foot.

A reason for the gap between the officers on foot and the officers in a radio car is that until Weldon became director in 1958, these were separate divisions and under separate command. The foot men worked for the precinct and the radio cars worked for the radio division. Weldon abolished the radio division.

Whistle and Stick

These were the two tools that the patrol sergeant used in communicating with the officer. He would blow his whistle twice and the officer was supposed to answer with a simple blast or he would rap with his nightstick and the officer would give an answering rap to indicate that he was there. The system that prevailed in the 1930's and ended sometime in the forties was a central one in which the lieutenant threw a switch which turned on a red light above the call box, then a foot officer was to run to the call box and call in. He was in great trouble if he didn't and so this was a nightmare.

The Importance of Call Boxes for the Officer on Foot --

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The most important ^{thing} that every officer was taught was to be sure to make his duty call at the call box at the right time. These were great big green boxes which had telephones inside and the saying in the department ^{was} to

"Make your pull and meet the boss"

These were the two jobs of a police officer. Under any circumstances an officer must make his pull on time -- he had only 3 minutes during which it was his turn to call and then it was somebody else's turn. And if he missed that call he was in great trouble with his bosses. As we discussed this, officers became very animated in explaining how terribly important it was to make the call. And quickly volunteered that they woke up nightly having nightmares about not having made the phone in time. One joked about if there

was a robbery taking place at the time which an officer was to make his call, his priority should be to make the call first, then to go after the robbery. And then another officer joked that I should know about the times when officers had thrown a brick through a window in order to have a reason for missing their call. If an officer anticipates being busy for some reason, he is supposed to notify the precinct that he will miss ^{his} next call, but this was frowned upon.

Status during the period 1948 - 1959

The foot officer felt very low in his status frankly and felt it was a promotion to get into a radio car. The only person who was lower than he was the officer on traffic duty. He was considered the dumbest. Of course in the traffic division there were the men who didn't stand at traffic lights, but rode on motorcycles and they were rather elite. Of course ^{the} most prestigious job of all which has always ^{been held by many} police officer rank rather than sergeant rank would be to be a detective.

Status of Foot Patrol after 1959

Weldon in about 1959 added a great many cars to the police department and made working in the car part of the recruit training between the academy and training in the streets. However, the academy curriculum continued to be old fashioned and to prepare officers for duties as a foot patrolman and so officers coming out of the training who did not receive assignments to radio cars, but only to foot posts were very disgruntled.

Record Keeping which improves the count of crimes known to the police

1. Officers' written reports-- In 1948 officers were required to make a written report on almost all citizen contacts. Every contact to which they were dispatched, they were required to write a separate narrative report, even if the contact were no more important than a cat up a tree. This administrative report continued until 1958 or 59 when Weldon replaced the handwritten narrative with a multipurpose check-off report. The multipurpose check the boxes report form.
2. Orders for writing reports -- The rules and regulations manual for 1948 and 1966 do not contain any rules on report writing.* From the period of 1948 to about 1959 report writing was expressed by the ~~commander~~ precinct as really an important part of the job. If an officer did not write his report properly it would be given back to him to be made perfect. Sometimes a lieutenant would rip up the report that was inadequate and would tell the officer to do it again.

About 1968 or 69 there was an idiot sheet which the department sent out each week to the precinct and any mistakes that officers made on their reports would be put on that sheet with the names of the officers attached. Naturally, officers paid close attention so that they would not get onto the idiot sheet.

* The procedure for writing report was covered in a company manual to the rules in 1948.

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With the 1959 report form containing holes

It became clear to the officer what information *he* should put down whereas in the narrative, the quality varied a great deal between reports, with some officers leaving out considerable information. Reports have always had to be submitted no later than the end of the tour. *When the Department began to pay* overtime to officers, the department can't afford to keep officers after hours to make an adequate report and so some supervisors accept inadequate reports. Over the years there have been changes in reports which are supposed to come into the station. At times when the department had a great deal of manpower and not such a large workload, officers would come in and write their reports immediately after the crime then with increasing workloads, they were permitted to write reports by hand out in the car. When they would come to the station, they would have to type them. The department tried in the 1930's to make a system of dictation for the reports called Ediphone. It worked very well initially, but then when it became standard and civil service tests were used to fill the posts of the typists, the system broke down because the typists were not competent. During our 30 year period, the detective bureau has tried typing reports that the officers dictated and it failed also, for lack of qualified personnel. The Youth Aid Bureau has been using a dictation system with memory typewriters so that the officers can make small corrections in the report and then it is retyped automatically and this system has worked well because the Youth Aid Bureau gets competent typists. They lose many to higher paying jobs, but then they manage to get new ones.

4. Transmittal of Reports -- *Today* reports take a day to go from the police officers with his report to the detective bureau for follow-up investigation. The department has considered using a FAX machine, by which copies can be immediately sent electrically over the telephone lines between precincts and detective bureau, but they have never followed up on installing it.
5. The Number of Reports -- Before 1948, there has been a number given to all crimes by the record girl. There was also in '48 a separate number which the detective girls gave the crime report and also a precinct number. At that time the detective bureau got the reports within a half hour of the time the officers finished writing them. The system that prevails today is that the number for crime reports is put on by the communications division and it is now called a CC number (Central Control number) rather than a RB (Records Bureau #). The precincts still assign their own numbers to their

crime reports because they have a log system by which they keep track of their local crime. These systems do not give numbers to incidents which come over the dispatching system which do not result in crime reports. The numbers given to calls dispatched are simply stamped on the back of the cards later as the method of obtaining how many calls their had been.

6. The New Computer system -- established in 1978 gives an incident number to **everything** at the time the dispatch is made. There is also a law enforcement number called LEN which is given in Newark.

The Central Office checking a random sample of reports by calling the citizens involved.

This process began in 1960 to 61 in which a central office pulled a sample of the detective reports to call up the crime victims to see if the detectives had contacted them at all or had contacted them by phone or had contacted them in person. Deputy Chief Evans discussed citizen satisfaction of those who had received a moving violation charge and had pleaded guilty. The general picture as Evans described it was one of grudging respect.

survey was a one-shot effort, I believe.

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General Discussion of Changes which have taken place over the years

Some of the officers were maintaining that the problems of society have changed a great deal because the city has gone through such a transformation, especially since the white flight after the '67 riots. Others have maintained that the problems are much the same and changes are trends in police work. An example of a trend in police work is the centralization. In the 1960s there was a very serious talk of centralization in the department and closing down all the precincts stations. Deputy Chief George Hemmer took a research trip to the Oakland police department to study their centralization. (recall George Webers 1965 thesis was basically promoting centralization.) Members of the public stopped the centralization move in the mid-'60s and the riots ended all talk of it.

After the riots, the department established store-fronts despite the fact that they are costly.

Special Units

During the 1960's and early 70s, the department had established

Community Relations Unit in 1966

Narcotics Strike Forces between the city & county

Auto Accident Investigative Unit which was quite important.

Proliferation of Police Departments

In 1948 there was only the Newark police department, the state police, the Port Authority police, and the Park police which is a very limited patrol and the sheriff's office. Today, there are in addition to these others, there are the railroad police, the housing police, hospitals have their police, Rutgers University and New Jersey Institute of Technology all have police departments, with more or less powers of arrest. The officers expressed a feeling that these other departments have been created because the Newark police dept. can't serve the needs of these organizations to the level that the organizations expect.

The Housing Authority Police

The incorporation of the housing department police in the Newark Police department was a deal which Police Director Redden worked out in about 1971. The Housing Authority police have always wanted to be real police officers and have been looking for every opportunity to upgrade themselves.

The Housing Authority Police - cont.

The city government was looking to; ^{supply} black police officers and the fact that the housing authority officers were available, seemed to be a solution to the problem. The commanders who at the meeting were outspoken thought that it was a mistake to incorporate the housing authority officers into the police department. They first came in as special police and they worked separately only in the housing units under the same commanders as before, so the change was only in name. Then they received training at the police academy. Inspector O'Reilly was at the police academy at that time and was giving training to one of the classes on how to write reports. They were having difficulty with it and so he asked all the people who can't read to raise their hand and about 2/3 of the group raised their hands. O'Reilly reported to his superiors, but he was told to teach them to read. Gradually the housing authority who are now special police officers of the Newark police department became integrated into the department until now they are a regular part of the department. The individuals ^{talk to} about this include Jack Hollaway who is the president of the Housing Authority Organization. This group felt that he would give me a picture different from the one that they were giving me because they strongly believe that standards were dropped drastically in bringing the Housing Authority into the police department.

Recruitment

Between about 1931 or 1933 and 1947 there were no recruits in the Newark police department. This is according to ^{Nelgar} who joined the department in 1931. Other officers said that they had heard there were no recruits between 1941 and 47. ^{He} maintained that there were no promotions between 1928 and 1943. In any case, in 1946 Newark held an examination which 3,000 people attended and from which 200 people were hired. They held a similar examination from which 200 were hired in 1947. 1947 exam also attracted several thousand people and about 200 were hired from it 1948. The number on successive exams to 1950 dropped off. There were so many recruits from the first two exams that not all of them could go to the academy at once, ^{So} half of them were put on the street while the other half were being trained. The ones who had served in World War II had a sense of discipline and did well in the police department. Tom O'Reilly who was at the police academy in 1966 to 1968 said that the Vietnam veterans were very different. They regarded everybody as the enemy and did not have good discipline. The recruits who came in after their army ^{in the} late 60s were also very young, because many had served in the army at ages 18 to 21 and the youngness of the officers

showed up in the department's auto accident rates for patrol cars which went very high in the late 60s.

Recruitment of Minority Officers

This recruitment was very difficult in the late 60s and especially difficult after the riot of '67, because then if a black person joined the department -- he was seen as joining the oppressors. The year after the riots was also the year of the token in Newark and every business and industry was offering attractive, to skilled and educated black people. Since the salaries of the police department were low and the job could not compete with industry, there was a campaign the department put on of leafleting, posters on buses. George Hemmer even went to Tennessee to give a talk to recruit people, but minority members looked down on the job as being a tool of the white oppressors. The department even held walk-in exams in which any day someone could walk in and take the exam. If you failed it one day, you could come back the next day. They tried ~~taking~~ people separately, they tried ~~taking~~ them together at the same table. (This was said for effect, rather than to be believed.)

The role of police

In 1948 you were the law and you reversed the law as you saw fit. A saying of that day which is very true, "There is more law at the end of the nightstick than in all the law books." All an officer had to know was the 10 commandments. He had no trouble at all in moving a group off the corner. But now he tries to move a group off the corner, there is somebody who will act smart in the group and talk about his rights. An example of changed policy and changed roles of the police is what the police are doing about bongo drums. The policy in the early 60s was that people were not allowed to play the drums in the parks at 3 in the morning. Now there is no policy and people can play the bongo drums any time they please and it seems as though the department is about to arrest the people who call about playing the bongo drums. (These kind of comments showing feelings rather than facts came out toward the end of the group discussions).

The Changed relationships between the police and the courts

Back in 1948 the courts perceived the police as being interested in the community and as reflecting the public interest. When an officer arrested somebody, ~~the~~ the judge presumed that he had a reason for making an arrest, otherwise he wouldn't have brought the man into court. The court was physically located in the police precinct station and so the judge and the precinct captain were on very good and close terms and the judge and the officers were on a friendly basis. Imagine how surprised prisoners would be to hear the judge and the arresting officer exchanging greetings such as "how is the family?" The captain and the judge both got their positions through political pull (this comment was made ^{it} it was not an appropriate time to follow up and ask for specifics). Another consequence of having the court in the police station is that it was local to the neighborhood and the repeat ~~offenders~~ were well known to the judge. He would be able to sentence appropriately since he knew the individual and his history.

Leadership in the Department over thirty years

During this period the police department has been a political football. The time when it was not, when the police officer had a sense of pride in his department was under Director Weldon. Commissioner Keenan was a fiery politician. He was the one who decided when the raids would take place and he loved to make raids. He was strong willed and he liked to act as though he were the police chief. Keenan appointed a completely ~~k~~ new crop of detectives and sent the old detectives back to patrol. Keenan liked Weller and the way he promoted Weller was when the sergeant's exam was finished and there were 100 sergeants above Weller, he promoted 100 sergeants in order to reach Weller. Then when the ^{lieutenant} exam results came in and there were 100 people above Weller on the lieutenant's exam, that was too many to appoint to lieutenant. The fellow commissioners of Keenan turned him down and so Keenan managed to make Weller a police director (I need to check in the newspaper files on both the individual and the position.) The only strong police chief during this period was Lacey. After him, Spina was a strong director. Kelly who was a chief at that time and highly competent could have been a strong chief, but he was undermined by Spina. In the struggle between police chiefs and directors, the chiefs consistently lost. In 1976, the state legislature had a bill under consideration which would allow the 6 large cities in the state to appoint the chief of police, but this was not passed. The fact of a civil service chief of police to some extent protects the department from politics which the director brings. The current chief Zizza is particularly weak, because he is only an acting chief. If he acted

as a chief in 1976, Weldon was a strong chief but at the same time, nobody expected, was aware of it.

Leadership in the department over thirty years - continued

out of turn, he would cease to be chief tomorrow.

Close Check -- What was the 1962 ordinance change? What was the style of Spina that he gave this speech against booze, broads and bucks? What were the details on the positions of commissioner, director and chief?

Changes under Weldon

He accomplished a great deal. More in 3 years than the department had accomplished in the whole thirty. He was a man ahead of his time. He brought in ideas from the outside. He combined the foot patrol and motor patrol under the command of precinct captains and did away with the radio division.

Police officers serving on the City Council

In the 1930s and 40s there was John Brady who was a retired Inspector. More recently there has been Ricky Vontemple, who came to the City Council when law and order was an issue. There is Tony ~~Juliano~~ ^{Juliano} who was a politician from a family of politicians. There was Anthony Carino who has been a school teacher and there is Henry Martinez, (apparently he killed somebody) These three are on the City Council now. It has not made much difference to the department that these three are serving. The one thing you could say from their being on the Council is that they got a unanimous vote on raises for police officers.

The city council politics is particularly turbulent in the late 1960s and many times a ~~hassle~~ ^{hassling} crowd seemed that they might become a real threat to the councilman. Chief Martin looked at the council chambers and noted that there was no way for the councilmen to get out since the doors were all on the audience side and he wanted a back door built to let the councilmen escape, but none ever was. Today there are a number of police officers who either have run for council office or are considering it. Fortuna is somebody who wants to become a councilman. Ron Rice is another. Jim Simon. There is a fellow named Brown. These three have taken leave to run for office. Carino ran for Sheriff. Clark Coleman is running for office but refuses to take a leave of absence and so the department is bringing him up on charges. Everyone doubts whether this will come to anything. (Apparently they don't have much confidence that the charges will be followed through)

The Down Neck District

This used to be the old police district 3 and was a kingdom unto itself. The officers in it all had a tremendous amount of seniority and you had to have 20 years on the street before you could ride in the radio car.

Victimization Surveys

The LEAA victimization survey of 1972 and the repeat in 1974 mentioned to me twice. Once before the meeting began and once toward the end of the meeting by someone who had not heard it first mentioned. Both times the victimization surveys were compared against the UCR estimates of total amounts of crime to prove the point that Newark has good relations with the public because for every victimization known to the Newark police, the survey came up with only 1.1 victimizations according to one officer who saw the report. (The consensus was that if the victimization survey were conducted now it would not find such a high ratio of report of crime gain in the UCR) (The Newark victimization surveys were seriously flawed and substantially understate the amount of crime.)